

Message Text

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PAGE 01 KHARTO 01310 01 OF 02 061250Z

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
----- 098743

P R 061130Z MAY 76

FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1662

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMCONSUL ASMARA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 KHARTOUM 1310

EXDIS

DEPARTMENT PASS USCINCEUR PRIORITY
AND OTHER POSTS AS DESIRED

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, ET

SUBJECT: CISCO II: DEBRIEFING OF CAMPBELL AND HARRELL

REF: KHARTOUM 1281

BEGIN SUMMARY: CAMPBELL AND HARRELL WILLINGLY DEBRIEFED
APRIL 5, WITH CAMPBELL DOING MOST OF THE TALKING. AFTER
ARDUOUS TWELVE DAY JOURNEY FOLLOWING JULY 14 CAPTURE,
CISCO II SPENT REMAINING NINE MONTHS AT TWO DIFFERENT
CAMPS APPROXIMATELY EIGHT HOURS SLOW DRIVE FROM
SUDANESE COSTAL BORDER TOWN OF KARORA. HOSTAGES TREATED
WELL AND RECEIVED REGULAR PARA-MEDICAL CARE. THEY
HAD NO EXPOSURE TO PLF LEADERSHIP, USUALLY REMAINING
IN COMPANY OF ONLY FIVE TO SIX GUERILLA GUARDS.
WHAT LITTLE POLITICAL DISCUSSION THEY HEARD WAS COLORED
BY NAIVE SOCIALIST RHETORIC. CISCO II
SAW VARIETY OF WEAPONS IN PLF HANDS MOSTLY OF
SOVIET AND CHINESE ORIGIN BUT INCLUDING SOME AMERICAN.
END SUMMARY.

1. FOLLOWING ARE CHRONOLOGICAL HIGHLIGHTS OF CISCO II
SAGA: (SEE PARA 8 BELOW FOR ACOUNT OF PRE-KIDNAPPING EVENTS)

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PAGE 02 KHARTO 01310 01 OF 02 061250Z

JULY 14 - TWO PAIRS OF ARMED GUERRILLAS ENTERED STATION WHERE CAMPBELL AND HARRELL AND FOUR ERITREANS WORKING, LOADED THEM INTO CISCO TRUCK AND DROVE FOR 45 MINUTES. TRUCK THEN ABANDONED AND GROUP TRAVELED THREE HOURS BY FOOT ACCOMPANIED BY THREE GUERRILLAS. TRAVEL OVER NEXT SEVERAL DAYS UNTIL ARRIVING AT CAMP JULY 26 WAS MORE OR LESS IN NORTHEAST DIRECTION AND WAS ACCOMPLISHED ON COMBINATION MULE, CAMEL, FOOT AND FINALLY LAND ROVER.

JULY 18 - PARTY ARRIVED AT VALLEY WHERE SOME TWO HUNDRED GUERRILLAS,- INCLUDING A FEW WOMEN, LOCATED.

JULY 19 - ANOTHER TWO HUNDRED GUERRILLAS ENCOUNTERED. CISCO CHARACTERIZED THIS DAY AS ONLY INSTANCE IN WHICH HARSH TREATMENT METED OUT: "BOSS" GUERRILLA ORDERED SIX CAPTIVES WITH GUARDS TO SPEND SEVERAL HOURS UNDER BROILING SUN.

JULY 23 - HARRELL CAME DOWN WITH BASE CASE OF DYSENTARY AND BECAME CONSIDERABLY WEAKENED.

JULY 24 - WHEN CAMPBELL TOLD GUERRILLAS THAT HARRELL MIGHT NOT SURVIVE MORE TRAVEL BY FOOT, A LAND ROVER WAS OBTAINED AND USED FOR NEXT TWO DAYS TRAVEL.

JULY 26 - GROUP ARRIVED AT PLF TRAINING CAMP AND OBSERVED SEVERAL HUNDRED GUERRILLAS INVOLVED IN SBAYONET EXERCISES, ETC. IN THE DESERT AT THE FOOT OF SOME HILLS. GROUP DROVE THROUGH VALLEY CONTAINING CLUSTERS OF GUERRILLAS, BUNKERS, CAMOUFLAGED TREES, TWO AND ONE-HALF TON TRUCKS AND LAND ROVERS. ON SAME DAY, CISCO II PRESENTED TO TWO GERMANS WITH TV CAMERAS. WHEN CAMPBELL ASKED GUARDS WHETHER THEY WERE EAST OR WEST GERMANS, GUARDS, AFTER CONSULTING JOURNALISTS, REPLIED THEY WERE "FREE LANCERS."

JULY 27 - FOUR ERITREAN CAPTIVES WERE TAKEN AWAY AND WERE NEVER SEEN AGAIN BY CISCO II. CAMPBELL AND HARRELL
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PAGE 03 KHARTO 01310 01 OF 02 061250Z

WERE TAKEN TO A SPOT NEAR SOME WATER THAT WAS THEIR HOME UNTIL DECEMBER 16.

JULY 28 - A SYRIAN REPORTER, ADVERTISED BY GUERRILLAS AS REPRESENTING CBS, INTERVIEWED AND PHOTOGRAPHED CISCO II.

AUGUST 2 - TWO OR THREE PROP PLANES, CALLED CANBERRAS

BY GUERRILLAS, MADE BOMBING RUNS UP AND DOWN
THE VALLEY ABOUT ONE MILE FROM CISCO II LOCATION.

AUGUST 4 - FRENCH CORRESPONDENT (LUCIEN BITTERLIN)
INTERVIEWED CISCO II (SEE 75 KHARTOUM 1887).

AUGUST 6 - F-5 AIRPLANES, ALWAYS REFERRED TO BY
GUERRILLAS AS AMERICAN OR "YOUR" PLANES, MADE SEVERAL
ROCKET ATTACKS IN VALLEY, PASSING OVER CISCO II
POSITION ON TURNS BUT FIRING AT TARGETS APPROXIMATELY
ONE MILE AWAY. CISCO II OBSERVED F-5 ATTACKS EVERY
TWO OR THREE DAYS THROUGHOUT THE AUGUST - DECEMBER
PERIOD.

SEPTEMBER 3 - ITALIAN WOMAN REPORTER AND CAMERAMAN
INTERVIEWED CISCO II. GUERRILLA GUARD NAMED
"HAILE", WHO REMAINED WITH CISCO II FOR LONG PERIOD,
TRIED TO STEER INTERVIEW IN WAY TO MAKE IT APPEAR THAT
KAGNEW STATION WAS IMPORTANT TO USG AS EVER DESPITE
GREAT REDUCTIONS IN PERSONNEL. CAMPBELL AND HARRELL
EXPLAINED REDUCTIONS IN TERMS OF SHIFT TO ALTERNATE
MEANS OF COMMUNICATIONS.

OCTOBER 21 - CAMPBELL CAME DOWN WITH MALARIA AND WAS
TREATED WITH CHLORAQUIN.

OCTOBER 29 - BBC PHOTOGRAPHER NICK DOWNEY ARRIVED WITH
FRENCH REPORTER. (CISCO II REPORT NOT RPT NOT HAVING SEEN
BRITISH CORRESPONDENT GWYNN ROBERTS.)

NOVEMBER 22 - ITALIAN CAPTIVE JOINED CAMP.

DECEMBER 16 - CISCO II, ITALIAN AND GUARDS PACKED UPP
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PAGE 04 KHARTO 01310 01 OF 02 061250Z

CAMP AND DROVE BY LAND ROVER BACK UP THE VALLEY WHENCE
THEY HAD COME TO ANOTHER CAMP APPROXIMATELY ONE-HALF
HOUR AWAY. CISCO II PRESUMED MOVE WAS FOR REASONS OF
SAFETY, I.E. TO MOVE FURTHER AWAY FROM F-5 ROCKET
ATTACKS. CISCO II GIVEN ONE OF THREE SIMPLE ROCK
HOUSES.

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED ABOVE ADDRESSEES.

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PAGE 01 KHARTO 01310 02 OF 02 061245Z

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ACTION SS-25

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P R 061130Z MAY 76
FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1663
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 KHARTOUM 1310

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DECEMBER 17 - U.K. HONORARY CONSUL BURWOOD-TAYLOR
AND TWO CHINESE CAPTIVES ARRIVED AT CAMP. TWO
CHINESE GIVEN ONE HOUSE AND BURWOOD-TAYLOR ANOTHER,
WITH ITALIAN BEING SHIFTED BETWEEN BURWOOD-TAYLOR AND
CISCO II HOUSES.

JANUARY 12 - CHINESE AND ITALIAN HOSTAGES TAKEN AWAY.

JANUARY 25 - CHINESE AND ITALIAN RETURNED TO CAMP.

JANUARY 27 - CAMPBELL AND HARRELL AGREED TO SEND OUT
LETTERS TO FAMILIES. ELF HAD BEEN URGING THEM FOR SEVERAL
DAYS TO WRITE LETTERS SAYING THAT THEY HAD
RECEIVED LETTERS FROM HOME AND THAT THEY WERE IN GOOD
HEALTH. CICO II HAD STALLED, BELIEVING SUCH LETTERS
MIGHT SERVE ELF PURPOSES MORE THAN THEIR OWN.

FEBRUARY 2 - ITALIAN AND CHINESE AGAIN TAKEN FROM
CAMP.

APRIL 13 - CICO II HEARD ON BBC AND DEUTSCHE WELLE
THAT THEY WOULD BE TRIED BY MILITARY COURT. GUERRILLA
GUARDS WHO WERE ASKED ABOUT REPORT BY CICO II SAID
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PAGE 02 KHARTO 01310 02 OF 02 061245Z

THEY KNEW NOTHING ABOUT IT.

APRIL 30 - CAMPBELL AND HARRELL TOLD TO PACK, AND WERE DRIVEN IN TRUCK FROM 8 P.M. UNTIL 3 A.M., WHEN THEY CROSSED THE SUDANESE BORDER INTO KARORA. TRUCK TRAVELLED AT ABOUT TWENTY TO THIRTY MILES PER HOUR AND OFTEN MUCH MORE SLOWLY DURING SEVEN HOUR TRIP.

MAY 1 - AFTER MANY HOURS' DELAY, SUDANESE IMMIGRATION OFFICER ARRIVED, AND TOLD THEM THAT PLF GUERRILLAS WOULD TAKE THEM ON TO TOKAR ACCOMPANIED BY SUDANESE POLICE OFFICER AND THENCE TO PORT SUDAN. IMMIGRATION OFFICER WAS ACCOMPANIED BY MAN IDENTIFIED AS PLF REP FROM KHARTOUM.

MAY 3 - PARTY ARRIVED AT PORT SUDAN AT 3 A.M. AND SLEPT. WEATHER WAS OVERCAST IN AFTERNOON AND CISCO II JUDGED THAT FLIGHT SCHEDULED FOR THAT AFTERNOON MIGHT HAVE BEEN DIFFICULT FOR SMALL AIRCRAFT AWAITING THEM.

MAY 4 - CISCO II FLOWN TO KHARTOUM AND TURNED OVER TO EMBASSY REPRESENTATIVE.

2. EXCEPT FOR THE JULY 19 INCIDENT NOTED ABOVE, CAMPBELL AND HARRELL WERE TREATED WITH CIVILITY THROUGHOUT THEIR CAPTIVITY. FACT THAT BOTH MARRIED TO ERITREAN WOMEN, PLUS KNOWLEDGE THAT HARRELL HAD COME TO ASMARA TO SETTLE PERMANENTLY, DEFINITELY WORKED IN THEIR FAVOR. GUARDS REPEATEDLY ASSURED CAPTIVES THAT THEY HAD NOTHING AGAINST THEM PERSONALLY BUT THAT KIDNAPPING HAD BEEN DEMONSTRATION AGAINST USG. GUERRILLAS NEVER SPOKE OF RANSOM OR OTHER CONDITIONS FOR RELEASE.

3. CISCO II WERE NEVER EXPOSED TO PLF LEADERS, WHOSE NAMES WERE NEVER MENTIONED BY GUERRILLA GUARDS. GUARDS THEMSELVES SPOKE ENGLISH IN VARIOUS DEGREES. THEIR RELIGION WAS NOT EVIDENT, BUT CISCO II NEVER OBSERVED MOSLEM PRAYING. BEGINNING ON JULY 24, CISCO II WERE UNDER THE CHARGE OF GUERRILLA KNOWN ONLY AS "TIGER" FOR PERIOD OF MORE THAN THREE MONTHS.

4. GUERRILLAS SPOKE LITTLE OF POLITICS, AND WHEN THEY

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PAGE 03 KHARTO 01310 02 OF 02 061245Z

DID IT WAS WITH A SOCIALIST BUT OFTEN SIMPLISTIC CANT, E.G., "WHY IS U.S. AGAINST PROGRESSIVE COUNTRIES LIKE USSR, CHINA AND CUBA?" (FYI. TIME TO TIME GUERRILLAS USED TERM "COMRADE," AND BOOK MOST COMMONLY SEEN (IN ONE COPY) HAD APPROXIMATE TITLE "WRITINGS OF LENIN." HARRELL AND CAMPBELL AVOIDED POLITICAL DISCUSSIONS.

5. WHEN ITALIAN CAPTIVE ARRIVED AT CAMP HE TOLD CISCO II

THAT PEOPLE IN ASMARA, INCLUDING CISCO PERSONNEL, THOUGHT CAMPBELL AND HARRELL MIGHT HAVE JOINED THE PLF GUERRILLAS. (FYI CAMPBELL TELLS US HE HAD HAD CONTRETEMPS ON JULY 9 WITH CISCO BOSSES OVER QUESTION OF HIS ERITREAN WIFE NOT BEING PERMITTED TO CONTINUE LIVING AT THE STATION. CAMPBELL SUSPECTS THAT THIS INCIDENT MAY HAVE ACCOUNTED FOR CIRCULATION OF UNFRIENDLY STORIES IN THE CISCO COMMUNITY. END FYI.

6. WEAPON MOST COMMONLY OBSERVED BY CISCO II WAS SOVIET MODEL OF CHINESE AK-47, CALLED "KALASHINS" BY PLF. "TIGER" SPORTED ISRAELI AUTOMATOC WEAPON REFERRED TO AS A "UZY" (PHONETIC). DRIVING THROUGH VALLEY THEY SAW M-60 MACHINE GUNS AND M-14 AUTOMATIC WEAPONS. THEY ALSO SAW A CHINESE ROCKET LAUNCHER AS WELL AS CHINESE AND EITHER AMERICAN OR BRITISH GRENADES. ONE GUERRILLA GUARD MADE REFERENCE TO SUPPLY OF ARMS FROM ARAB COUNTRIES, AND ANOTHER SAID HE HAD SEEN BOX OF AMMUNITION LABELED AS COMING FROM LIBYA.

7. BOTH CAMPBELL AND HARRELL REPLIED WITH CONVICTION IN THE NEGATIVE WHEN ASKED WHETHER THEY IN ANY WAY SUSPECTED COMPLICITY IN THEIR CAPTURE ON THE PART OF THE FOUR ERITREAN EMPLOYEES TAKEN WITH THEM.

8. PRIOR TO ACTUAL CAPTURE OF CISCO II ON JULY 14, GUERRILLAS HAD STOPPED CISCO TRUCK WHICH THEY BELIEVED WAS FERRYING AMERICANS BETWEEN WORK AND HOME ON REGULAR SCHEDULE. WHEN THEY DISCOVERED THEIR MISTAKE, THEY APPARENTLY COMMANDEERED TRUCK AND DROVE TO BUILDING WHERE CAMPBELL AND HARRELL LOCATED. CISCO II BELIEVE THERE MAY HAVE BEEN TWO OR THREE OTHER GUERRILLAS IN VICINITY IN ADDITION TO TWO PAIRS OF GUERRILLAS WHO MADE CAPTURE. (IT IS NOT CLEAR HOW CISCO II LEARNED CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 04 KHARTO 01310 02 OF 02 061245Z

OF THESE EVENTS PRECEDING KIDNAPPING.)

9. COMMENT: CAMPBELL KEPT A CALENDAR THROUGHOUT HIS CAPTIVITY AND WAS THUS ABLE TO RECORD MANY DETAILS RECOUNTED ABOVE. IT IS CLEAR THAT BOTH HE AND HARRELL KEPT CLEAR HEADS AND A SENSE OF HUMOR THROUGHOUT. BREWER

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED ABOVE ADDRESSEES.

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